(iii) Weaving, processing and garment machinery, which are covered under TUFS, have been extended the facility of accelerated depreciation at the rate of 50%. Cost of machinery has also been reduced through Fiscal Policy measures. This further encourages modernisation.

(iv) With a view to encouraging backward integration, the custom duty on shuttleless looms has been brought to 5%. A programme has also been announced to induct 50,000 shuttleless looms and to modernise 2.5 lakh powerlooms in the decentralised sector by 2004.

(v) Foreign equity participation upto 100% through automatic route has been allowed in the textile sector with a few exceptions.

(vi) National Institute for Fashion Technology (NIFT), its six branches and Apparel Training & Design Centres (ATDCs) are running various courses/programmes to meet skilled manpower requirements of textile industry especially apparel in the field of design, merchandising and marketing.

(vii) To prepare and sensitise the textile industry to conform to the ecological requirements of importing countries by providing facilities by way of eco-testing laboratories.

Lifting ban on Shahtoosh weaving

2331. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that as per the news-item in the Indian Express dated the 2nd July, 2002 there would be an attempt to lift the ban on Shahtoosh weaving;

(b) if so, the facts in this regard;

(c) whether Government are aware of a study done by the Wildlife Trust of India on the Shahtoosh workers in the Kashmir valley;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) the ingredients that go into the making of Shahtoosh Shawl;

(f) whether these ingredients are banned; and

(g) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI BASAN GOUDA R. PATIL): (a) and (b) There is no proposal to lift the ban on Shahtoosh weaving.

(c) and (d) Yes Sir. The book describes the findings of an investigating team into the illegal trade in Shahtoosh, and results of a socio-economic survey to determine the extent of impact of the ban on Shahtoosh trade on the Shahtoosh handweaving cottage industry.

(e) Shahtoosh Shawl is made of Shahtoosh, superfine wool obtained from the underbelly fur of Tibetan Antelope or 'Chiru'. The only way to obtain Shahtoosh is to kill three to five Antelopes to get the sufficient wool for one shawl.

(f) and (g) The Chiru is listed in the Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and trade in Shahtoosh is prohibited in India.

JPM Act,1987

2332. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:
SHRI GAYA SINGH:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Jute Packaging Materials (Compulsory Use in Packing Commodities) Act, 1987 has lapsed as Government did not issue a fresh order in the wake of a stay order by the Calcutta High Court; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and what is Government's decision on the question of issuing a new order in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI BASAN GOUDA R. PATIL): (a) No Sir. The Jute Packaging Materials (Compulsory Use in Packing Commodities) Act, 1987 has not lapsed.

(b) The compulsory packaging order issued on 01.09.2001 under the JPM Act and modified on 01.03.2002 was valid upto 30.6.2002. Fresh orders were to be issued by Government on 01.07.2002. However, the High Court at Calcutta *vide* its orders dated 25.4.2002 in a writ petition no. T 235 of 2002 filed by Indian Jute Mills Association (IJMA) & Others,